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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 GENEVA 002058

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PRM FOR PDAS GREENE, L FOR BELLINGER, NEA FOR ISRAEL DESK

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/30/2010

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPAL](#) [EG](#) [IS](#) [ICRC](#) [MDA](#)

SUBJECT: MDA: SWISS PERMREP DESCRIBES PLANS FOR SEPT 12-13  
"INFORMALS"

Classified By: Ambassador Kevin Moley; reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C) Summary: In a meeting with Ambassador Moley, Swiss PermRep Blaise Godet described planning for the Sept 12-13 informal consultations on an additional emblem. Godet touched on his outreach plans prior to the consultations, Swiss thinking on the structure of the consultations, and possible outcomes/next steps and provided a draft information note. While reflecting the same determined attitude that Swiss State Secretary Ambuhl has in recent conversations with Under-Secretary Dobriansky, Godet highlighted the need for "a plan B" if the Sept 12-13 consultations do not go smoothly, not ruling out either a second set of consultations or an extension of time beyond October. He also said Israel must consider how to address Arab requests for some clarity on the issue of where MDA will operate. End Summary.

2. (C) Swiss PermRep Blaise Godet requested a meeting with Ambassador Moley August 30, to describe Swiss planning as we move into the last two weeks of preparation for the Sept 12-13 informal consultations on an additional emblem for the Red Cross/Crescent movement. Godet was accompanied by Swiss Ambassador-at-large on the Emblem Didier Pfirter. Moley was joined by DCM Lynn Cassel and RMA Counselor Piper Campbell. Godet described his outreach plans prior to the consultations. In addition to meeting with us, Godet was scheduled to meet August 30 with UK Permrep Thorne. Godet said he would try to persuade the UK that the emblem issue (and the Geneva Conventions generally) do not fall within the area of EU competence. Countries should make individual statements. Godet understood the UK would not stand in the way of this, but he had heard that some smaller (and newer) EU member states were arguing for a coordinated position.

3. (C) Godet also planned to meet the Israeli Ambassador August 30. Godet said he would try to dissuade the Israeli Ambassador from asking for a separate speaking role for the Chairman of the MDA. Israel, like other delegations, could include a rep of the national society in the delegation; however, asking for a special role for MDA would be "counterproductive." He also said Israel must consider what can be done to address Arab requests for some clarity on the issue of where MDA will operate. According to Didier Pfirter, MDA-Palestinian Red Crescent operational issues will be discussed in a September 4 meeting of the two national societies -- in addition to a meeting under the auspices of Dr. Al-Hadid of the Jordanian Red Crescent which we had understood was planned for late September in Geneva. Counselor Campbell commented that our approach all-along has been to push for the emblem as a humanitarian issue and to try to separate the discussion from political developments. She argued for maintaining the practical approach of leaving it primarily to the two national societies to work out their operational cooperation, without too much pressure from states. Another issue which the Israelis should expect to come up during the consultations is the wall, according to Godet. As the Chair, Godet said, he would oppose any linkage but there was a limit to how much he could steer the proceedings.

4. (C) Godet mentioned Malaysia, Syria, Egypt and the Palestinians as the entities most likely to vociferously oppose moving forward during the consultations. The Swiss informal tally is 40 "yes", 20 "no", and 10 "yes if consensus." Key to maintaining momentum is keeping any country from speaking on behalf of the OIC block.

5. (C) Godet provided a draft information note (reproduced in para 6 below) which will be sent out to Geneva missions this week. He said he would open the session, followed by introductory remarks by Standing Commission Chair Al-Hadid. There would then be a period of general debate. At the end, the Chair would make his own summary, without soliciting input on phrasing from the room. ICRC President Kellenberger -- who has been one of the strongest advocates for moving forward now -- would not have a planned speaking role but would be held in reserve. While Godet affirmed that he would proactively lead the discussions and hope for a positive outcome, he said Swiss officials believe they need "a plan B" if the Sept 12-13 consultations do not go smoothly. He did not rule out either a second set of consultations or an extension of the calendar beyond October 27-28 -- but he also emphasized Swiss recognition that leaving any thinking along

these lines would sabotage all hopes for progress in early September. Godet added that Swiss FM Calmy-Rey planned to make emblem diplomacy a core focus of her many meetings in New York in the margins of the UN High Level segment.

16. (SBU) DRAFT SWISS INFO NOTE

The Swiss Mission has the honour to refer to the general note regarding the issue of an additional Emblem for the Geneva Conventions which it circulated to Geneva Missions on July 27 and the invitation to informal discussions on the modalities of a Diplomatic Conference contained therein.

As announced in that note, the informal discussions will take place at the International Labour Office building, 4, route des Morillons, on 12 and 13 September, starting at 10 am on 12 September. It is suggested that State Parties participate at the level of their Permanent Representative to International Organisations in Geneva. The discussions will be chaired by the Permanent Representative of Switzerland to International Organisations in Geneva, Ambassador Blaise Godet.

Firstly, the Mission would like to provide you with some technical information:

- The meeting will take place in the "Salle du Conseil" of the International Labour Office building, from 10am to 1pm and 3pm to 6pm.
- Delegates with a driver may use the entrance. Delegates who need to park their car may do so in and use entrance
- Delegates will be required to exchange their ID against a Day-Pass at the entry of the ILO. To this effect it is suggested, that they bring either their UN access pass or their national passport.
- Delegates will be able to eat lunch at the ILO restaurant, situated on ... floor.
- As the meeting is one of informal discussions outside the framework of the United Nations, translation will be provided in French and English only (this is without prejudice to the translation during the Diplomatic Conference which will be provided in all six UN languages in accordance with established practice).
- For organisational reasons, the Depositary would like to request Missions to kindly reply with the attached form as to who will participate in the discussions.

Several Missions have enquired about the subject(s) of the discussion and an agenda. The Depositary has in the above mentioned note circumscribed the subject of the discussions as "modalities of the Conference", in view of the fact that there is virtually no opposition to the adoption of the additional Protocol in principle. Swiss Embassies have explained in capitals that the Depositary understands the term "modalities" in a broad sense, i.e. all relevant conditions and circumstances, including the question of the necessity of a Preparatory meeting.

Given this concept, the Depositary would not like to constrain the discussion with a very precise agenda, but rather suggest three points only:

1. Introduction by the Chair of the discussions and the President of the Standing Commission of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement
2. General Debate (3 minutes per delegation)
3. Follow up

Bearing in mind that the subject of the discussion is a Diplomatic Conference on the Adoption of an Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions, i.e. a Treaty making body outside the framework of the United Nations, the Depositary would like to encourage States Parties to make individual rather than group Statements as is customary in treaty making. The Depositary appeals to all Parties to participate in the process with a sense of cooperation and mutual understanding commensurate with the nature and purpose of the humanitarian Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

End Text.  
Moley